

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 01035 051544Z

41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

/080 W

----- 019092

R 051400Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8182

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 1035

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, PINS, IS, JO

SUBJECT: JEWS FAIL IN ATTEMPT TO PRAY ON TEMPLE MOUNT

(HARAM-AS-SHARIF)

REF: JERUSALEM 864

1. HAVING PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED THEIR INTENTION, 60-70 JEWS LED BY JERUSALEM MUNICIPAL COUNCILMAN GERSHON SOLOMON (LIKUD) STAGED ATTEMPT TO PRAY ON TEMPLE MOUNT (HARAM-AS-SHARIF) ABOUT 11:00 A.M. AUG 5. OCCASION WAS HOLIDAY (TISHA B'AV) COMMEMORATING DESTRUCTION OF FIRST AND SECOND TEMPLES. POLICE STOPPED THEM AT ENTRANCE TO TEMPLE MOUNT. ABOUT 40 ORTHODOX JEWISH FOLLOWERS OF SEPHARDI CHIEF RABBI OVADIA YOSEF ALSO TRIED TO PREVENT THEM PHYSICALLY FROM APPROACHING ENTRANCE TO MOUNT, EXCHANGING FISTICUFFS IN PROCESS.

2. AFTER POLICE SUCCEEDED IN SEPARATING TWO GROUPS, THOS LED BY SOLOMON

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PAGE 02 JERUSA 01035 051544Z

HELD PRAYERS ON RAMP LEADING UP FROM WESTERN

WALL AREA TO ENTRANCE TO TEMPLE MOUNT. SOLOMON THAN MADE SHORT SPEECH IN WHICH HE VOICED CONFIDENCE, IN LIGHT OF HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS MINISTER RAFAEL, THAT IT WOULD SOON BE POSSIBLE FOR JEWS TO PRAY ON MOUNT.

3. ALL WAS QUIET ON MOUNT ITSELF. THERE WAS NO ARAB COUNTER-DEMONSTRATION OR EFFORT TO PREVENT PRAYERS.

4. COMMENT: SOLOMON CLEARLY IMPLIED THAT RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS MINISTRY CONTEMPLATING ISSUANCE OF REGULATIONS UNCEP WHICH JEWISH PRAYERS WOULD BE PREMITTED AT SPECIFIED TIMES AND PLACES ON TEMPLE MOUNT. HOWEVER, IN ADDITION TO POLITICAL OBSTACLES TO SUCH ACTION, CHIEF RABBI YOSEF AND HIS ASHKENAZI COLLEAGUE, CHIEF RABBI SHLOMO GOREN, PRESUMABLY WOULD FIRST HAVE TO COME TO SOME AGREEMENT. YOSEF SUPPORTS TRADITIONAL VIEW THAT JEWS ARE FORBIDDEN TO TREAD ON ANY PART OF THIS HOLY SITE, WHILE GOREN REPORTEDLY TAKES POSITION THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN PERMISSABLE AREAS WHERE TEMPLE CLEARLY DID NOT STAND.

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